

Here's a text if you've only a minute ...

God raised this man Jesus to life, and all of us are witnesses to that.

First Reading

And so my heart rejoices, my soul is glad.

Psalms

The ransom that was paid to free you was not paid in anything corruptible, but in the precious blood of the Lamb. *Second Reading*

Make our hearts burn within us as you talk to us.

Gospel Acclamation

God our Father,
may we look forward with hope to our resurrection,
for you have made us your sons and daughters,
and restored the joy of our youth.

Old Opening Prayer

This week's texts if you want to reflect further:
Acts 2: 14, 22–33; Psalm 15 (16); 1 Peter 1: 17–21; Luke 24: 13–35

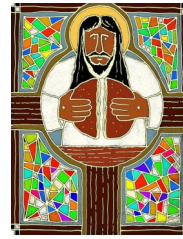


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...they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight.

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ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH IN THE DIOCESE OF WREXHAM



Third Sunday of Easter
Year A, 23rd April 2023

And their eyes were opened
and they recognised him

The readings for this week are full of reminders of what Jesus's resurrection has brought for us. Joy, Glory, Praise, Hope and Faith are all woven through each reading, inviting us to share again in the Eastertide celebration.

In the **First Reading**, Peter reminds the crowd that, in spite of the terrible injustice done to Jesus, God has shown victory over death and raised Jesus to glory. With this comes the power of the Holy Spirit, now outpoured for us all.

The **Psalms** rejoices in the God who stands by and protects us from all dangers, and will show us the path to everlasting happiness.

In the **Second Reading** we hear Peter again, speaking of how Jesus gave his life as a 'ransom' for our sins. Because of this, all who believe can have faith and hope in God.

We join two of Jesus's disciples in the **Gospel** on their journey to Emmaus, blind to the identity of the risen Lord as he walks with them. When Jesus reveals himself to them in the breaking of bread, they finally recognise him, just as he disappears from their sight.

Unlike the disciples, we have never seen Jesus himself – but because of the faith we have been given, we can see and recognise him in the people and situations around us. This week, let's pray for the wisdom and courage to respond wherever we see Jesus in the needs of others.



Opening Prayer

May your people exult for ever, O God,
in renewed youthfulness of spirit,
so that, rejoicing now in the restored glory of our adoption,
we may look forward in confident hope
to the rejoicing of the day of resurrection.

Psalm 15 (16)

R/. Show us, Lord, the path of life.

Preserve me O God, I take refuge in you.
I say to the Lord: 'You are my God.
O Lord, it is you who are my portion and cup;
it is you yourself who are my prize.'

I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel,
who even at night directs my heart.
I keep the Lord ever in my sight:
since he is at my right hand, I shall stand firm.

And so my heart rejoices, my soul is glad;
even my body shall rest in safety.
For you will not leave my soul among the dead,
nor let your beloved know decay.

You will show me the path of life,
the fullness of joy in your presence,
at your right hand happiness for ever.

I come to the place where I will pray today, and take a few moments to settle my body. If I can, I set aside any cares or concerns I am carrying, and let the joy of simply being in the Lord's presence enfold me.

When I am ready I read the words of the psalm, reciting them out loud if I can, and making them my own.

What does it mean to me to 'take refuge' in the Lord? Where am I called to 'stand firm'? I ponder the ways in which I experience the Lord's presence with me in these areas of my life.

The psalmist speaks of his closeness to God. Maybe I can share the joy, the happiness, the gladness he describes. Or perhaps I recall times in my life when I've felt unable to rejoice, times when I felt I'd lost sight of God's presence. I talk to the Lord about whatever is in my heart.

As my time of prayer comes to a close, I might like to take the psalm response and repeat it as a mantra: '*Show me, Lord, the path of life.*' Using my own words, I ask the Lord to bless me with the gifts and graces I need to follow the path he desires for me.

Gospel Luke 24: 13–35 (abridged)

Two of the disciples were on their way to Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem. As they talked, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but something prevented them from recognising him. He said to them, "What matters are you discussing as you walk along?" They stopped short; their faces downcast. Cleopas answered, "You must be the only person in Jerusalem who does not know these things." "What things?" he asked. "All about Jesus of Nazareth, who proved he was a great prophet by the things he said and did in the sight of God and of the whole people; and how our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: some women from our group went to the tomb in the early morning, and they did not find the body, they saw a vision of angels who declared he was alive." He said, "You foolish ones! So slow to believe the full message of the prophets! Was it not ordained that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?" Then starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the scriptures that were about himself. When they drew near the village they pressed him to stay with them. While they were at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?" They returned to Jerusalem where they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

As I begin my prayer, I offer my time to the Lord, and invite him to be beside me as I begin to read slowly through the text.

In my imagination, I watch and listen as the two disciples set out. I hear their disbelief, sadness and disappointment. Perhaps there have been episodes in my life when my faith and belief were challenged?

What helped to sustain me during these times? I ponder.

What do I notice about the disciples as Jesus explains the scriptures to them? Maybe I'm reminded of times when I've found solace and reassurance in scripture ... when I've encountered Jesus in the Gospels ... when my heart has burned? I stay and explore these memories for a while.

As Jesus blesses and breaks the bread, I offer thanks for the gift of himself. In time I end my prayer, perhaps repeating several times, '*My Lord and my God.*'